



Clark County Neighborhood Traffic Management Policy For Local Residential Streets

Introduction

In accordance with the following County goals and the "mission statement" of the Department of Public Works, the County and the department commit to a Neighborhood Traffic Management Policy (NTMP) that promotes and enhances the livability and vitality of its neighborhoods. This policy conforms to the following County goals and the mission statement of the Department of Public Works.

Goal A: Create partnerships with common interest groups and people within our community.

Goal B: Accelerate infrastructure to meet the challenges of growth and reinvestment.

Public Works Mission Statement: Deliver quality public works services, programs and facilities for a better community.

As population and employment continues to grow, streets are experiencing increased traffic pressure. This policy calls for the accommodations of growth in a way that can protect neighborhoods from the negative impacts of traffic.

The NTMP provides a process for the identification and handling of problems related to speeding, excessive volumes, cut-through or bypass traffic and safety on "local residential streets." Under the program, the Department of Public Works (DPW) will work with residents within neighborhoods to identify and evaluate the type and severity of traffic problems. If the required approval by stakeholders and residents is obtained, the County and its partners may install traffic calming features and control devices to manage the pattern and flow of neighborhood traffic.

As stated in the goals above, the County promotes the livability of its neighborhood. Basically, livability can be described as having the following characteristics:

- The ability of residents to feel safe and secure in their neighborhood
- The opportunity to interact socially with neighbors without distractions or threats
- The ability to experience a sense of home and privacy
- A sense of community and neighborhood identity
- A balanced relationship between the multiple uses and needs of a neighborhood

NTMP plays a vital role in promoting these characteristics. The NTMP recognizes that vehicular traffic is only one element of a neighborhood, and that other residential needs must be given careful consideration. Obviously, public safety (police, fire and emergency services) and other public services have their own respective roles. Through NTMP, residents can evaluate the various requirements, benefits and trade-offs of projects within their own neighborhood and can actively be involved in the decision-making process. This policy document provides information and guidelines to help them participate in that process.

Objectives

The overall objectives of the NTMP emanate from existing County goals and the mission of the Department of Public Works. They are:

- The improvement of neighborhood livability by the mitigation of the impacts of vehicular traffic on residential neighborhoods;
- The promotion of safe and pleasant conditions for motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians and residents on neighborhood streets;
- The encouragement of citizen involvement in all phases of neighborhood traffic management activities; and
- The efficient use of resources by developing partnerships, when possible, and prioritizing traffic management requests.

Policies

The following policies are established as part of the NTMP for local residential streets:

1. Citizens are encouraged to contact the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (Metro) and the Nevada Highway Patrol (NHP) to alert enforcement officials of speeding in their neighborhoods. These calls bring extra patrols to the trouble spots.
2. The DPW will first investigate the area to ensure that appropriate traffic controls and speed regulations are in place in accordance with federal, state and county laws and standards.
3. Through traffic should be routed to arterials by the continued improvement and expansion of the collector and arterial network to eliminate the intrusion of traffic into neighborhoods to bypass congested arterial intersections or segments.
4. It is possible that traffic may be rerouted from one local residential street to another as a result of an NTMP project. The amount of rerouted traffic that is acceptable should be defined on a project-to-project basis, established by the DPW as a guideline and acceptable to those affected.
5. Adequate emergency vehicle access must be preserved and additional delays to emergency responders minimized.
6. NTMP projects should encourage and enhance pedestrian, bicycle and transit access to neighborhood destinations. Reasonable automobile access must be maintained.
7. Application of the NTMP shall be limited to local residential streets, herein defined as streets with 60 feet or less of right-of-way, except for arterial roadway enhancements that contribute to the improvement of conditions on local residential streets.
8. The County may typically employ traffic management devices to achieve the NTMP's objectives. Traffic management features shall be planned and designed in keeping with sound engineering and planning practices.
9. The DPW will process traffic management requests in accordance with applicable codes, related policies and within the limits of available resources. At a minimum, the procedures shall provide for submittal of project proposals; evaluation of proposals by staff; citizen participation in plan development and evaluation; communication of any test results and

specific findings to area residents and affected neighborhood organizations before installation of permanent traffic management devices.

10. Requests for vacations of streets shall have total unanimity in support before the County will consider the request.
11. Neighborhoods may need to share costs of installation and maintenance, especially for landscaping.
12. Any NTMP project must consider the potential negative impacts on congested arterial and collector street segments and the overall transportation needs of the valley.

Projects

The NTMP includes local residential neighborhood street projects and neighborhood area studies. The DPW and outside resources, as needed, would be involved in conducting these studies.

Local residential street projects are intended to respond to traffic issues related to speeding and excessive cut-through or bypass traffic on local streets in a residential neighborhood. Neighborhood area studies may respond to excessive cut-through traffic speeding on multiple streets in one or more neighborhoods. This approval is needed to respond to traffic problems that are symptomatic of wider problems, such as congestion or lack of capacity on the arterial system. The problems may be similar to those addressed by local street projects, but are more pervasive, with high volumes of cut-through or bypass traffic on more than one adjacent street. The studies are scheduled based on available resources, given priority by factors that include, but are not limited to:

- Previous efforts and requests in the area
- Intensity and extent of the problems
- Degree of conflict between traffic conditions and land uses
- Availability of data
- Arterial improvement projects scheduled or planned

Typical Process

1. Project Request and Preliminary Review.

NTMP projects can be requested by residents of the neighborhoods. The requestor must submit a petition signed by two-thirds (66 percent) of the households on the project street or streets. Signatures representing a super-majority of the households on the project street are required to move the project forward. Each household is entitled to one signature. Citizens not residing in the study area are not to be included in the petition.

2. Study.

County staff with assistance from the requestor(s) establishes the study area, based on information obtained in the preliminary review. This area generally defined as those households and businesses fronting on the affected segments of the project street or streets. Generally, areas involved should not exceed a quarter section in area or more than 200 households. In the case of a single intersection problem, the minimum area would be approximately one block in all directions. If significant diversions to other residential streets are reasonably expected, those streets' residents would also be included in the study area. The standard impact is expressed in terms of total traffic

volume, i.e., vehicles per day (vpd). Generally, the resulting increase in traffic volumes on any local street should not exceed 400 vpd. An increase of up to 150 vpd as a result of an NTMP project is acceptable on any local residential street.

The purpose of the petition is to determine the level of agreement among residents on the project street or streets on the problem they want addressed. County staff can assist in preparation of the petition form, describing the problem and the procedures to be followed if a study is undertaken. The project requestor(s) will be responsible for circulation of the petition.

Signatures representing two-thirds (66 percent) minimum super-majority of the households within the study area are required to move the project forward. Each household is entitled to one signature. Property owners not residing in the study area are not to be included in the petition process. Total unanimity are necessary for street closures and vacations of public rights-of-way.

3. Plan Development.

The County will hold public meetings in or near the neighborhood to inform residents of the pending project, to describe the NTMP process and to gather additional information about the traffic problems and related neighborhood needs.

It is recommended that a traffic committee made up of residents in the neighborhood, of no more than six individuals, be formed at this stage. The neighborhood traffic committee works closely with County staff throughout the remainder of the project.

Plan development consists of the following steps:

- Assessment of existing conditions
- Identification of problem areas
- Identification of goals, objectives and evaluation criteria
- Development of alternative plans, associated impacts and solutions with costs
- Selection of courses of action, if any

The first three steps are accomplished through public meetings, neighborhood meetings, and, if applicable, neighborhood traffic committee meetings. Alternatives are proposed based on the citizen input, sound engineering principles and stakeholder concerns. Possible solutions and their impacts are evaluated by the neighborhood, County staff and other affected stakeholders. The County Commission will have final authority to act on the project and determine funding of the proposed improvements. Stakeholders that may be involved in plan development are as follows:

- Residents
- Road users
- Adjacent neighborhoods
- Fire
- Police
- Ambulance services
- Transit
- Utilities
- Public facilities
- School transportation
- Refuse collection/deliveries
- Maintenance providers

- Private businesses
- Mail carriers

4. Test Demonstrations.

Once a plan is agreed on by the neighborhood traffic committee and staff, the County prepares a petition describing the proposed project and calling for a temporary test demonstration, if applicable. Neighborhood traffic committee members circulate the petition within the defined area and must sign an affidavit that all residents have been contacted.

The petitioned area must include all properties located on the project street and on adjacent local residential streets within an area approximately one block from the project street. The traffic committee or the County may expand the petition area beyond these minimum requirements, if desired.

Signatures representing a two-thirds (66 percent) minimum super-majority of the households and businesses within the test area are required for the test to proceed. Each household and business is entitled to one signature.

If the petition is successful, the test will be installed for an agreed upon period. If the County discovers an unforeseen hazard, the test demonstration may be revised or removed.

5. Project Evaluation.

Following the test period, the County evaluates how well the test has performed in terms of the previously defined problems and objectives. The evaluation includes the subject street and streets impacted by the project, and is based on before-and-after speeds and volumes, impacts on emergency vehicles or commercial uses, and other evaluation criteria determined by the traffic committee and County staff. If, in the evaluation, desired improvements in quality of life are not met to the satisfaction of the traffic committee and staff, the traffic plan may be modified and additional testing conducted.

The final test results will be reviewed with the neighborhood committee, area residents and relevant staff, and the information will be distributed during the surveying stage.

The County will not forward a project to a survey if the test results show it may be unsafe or it violates NTMP policy or other County policies or regulations.

6. Survey.

To forward the project to the stage where permanent implementation is approved, approval from households, businesses and non-resident property owners within a defined survey area must be obtained via a confidential mail ballot administered by the County.

The survey area includes all properties located on the project street and on adjacent local residential streets that either are within an area approximately one block from the project or experience a traffic volume increase that is at least 75 percent of the maximum acceptable increase (300 vpd).

A two-thirds (66 percent) minimum super-majority of the returned ballots must be in favor of the project for it to proceed. Total unanimity is required for requests to vacate public

streets, which then must follow standard County procedures and processes. Each household, business and non-resident property owner is entitled to one vote.

7. Commission Action.

Based on the project evaluation and positive results of the survey, staff members prepare a report and recommendations for the Commission, if requested or necessary. The report outlines the process followed, includes the project findings and states the reasons for the recommendations. If the proposed traffic management program includes the vacation of streets, the request must follow standard procedures and process.

If the project does not obtain the required approval response rate, it is not an "approved project," and is not forwarded.

8. Prioritization.

If necessary, due to resource constraints, the DPW will prioritize projects based on traffic volumes, speed, accident history, pedestrian volumes, private sector participation, and other related factors.

9. Design and Construction.

Final design and construction are administered by the County and/or partners and is generally completed as allowed by resource availability.

10. Monitoring.

The DPW Traffic Management Division will periodically monitor constructed traffic management devices. The DPW Maintenance Management Division will be responsible for maintenance of physical roadway features and the Traffic Management Division will be responsible for maintenance of traffic control devices.

Traffic Management Features/Devices

Some of the traffic management features that may be used are as follows:

1. road pavement markings
2. mid-block medians
3. circles
4. lane narrowing
5. partial street closure
6. street closure
7. radar speed monitoring trailer
8. cul-de-sac
9. neckdown/bulb out
10. modified intersection
11. forced turn barrier/semi-diverter
12. diverter

Stop Signs

Residents involved in NTMP projects often ask why stop signs are not used as a traffic management device.

Stop signs are used to assign right-of-way at an intersection. They are installed at intersections where an accident problem is identified, where unremovable visibility restrictions exist (such as buildings or topography), and/or where volumes are high enough that a normal right-of-way rule is unduly hazardous. The installation of stop signs must comply with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices as required by Nevada Revised Statutes 484.781 and 484.783.

Stop signs are generally not installed to divert traffic or reduce speeding. Studies from other jurisdictions show that such use of stop signs rarely has the intended effect. In fact, the use of stop signs solely to regulate speed typically causes negative traffic safety impacts (non-compliance with the signs and increased accidents).

Guideline for the Closure of Residential Streets

Clark County is committed to preserving neighborhood integrity. One of the issues in the maintenance of livable communities is traffic and the need to minimize non-essential vehicular traffic on residential streets and the need to ensure that those vehicles using those streets are not using them to bypass arterial streets. A technique that has been used successfully is the closure of the street to normal traffic.

The purpose of this policy shall be to set forth the process and criteria by which modification of traffic flow or closure of public streets may be considered by staff and elected officials and to identify the conditions under which closures or modifications may be enacted. This policy should only apply to the closure or modification of traffic flow on public streets initiated by citizens. This policy should not apply when initiated by a local agency to address specific traffic safety issues or to comply with state and federal standards and warrants. The policy also does not apply to temporary changes in traffic that are needed to stage construction or maintenance activities or special events.

1. Administrative Procedures.
 - NTMP project includes issues of excessive volumes of traffic and the traffic engineer finds that a street closure may be appropriate
 - Staff evaluates site based on minimum criteria. Evaluation would include recommending a location on both the requested street and adjacent streets where a closure or other mitigating measures may be required to mitigate impact of the closure.
 - Following the procedures contained in the NTMP, public comments and approval are received.
 - Action follows using standard procedures to approve installation.
2. Minimum Criteria.

To effectively use street closures for neighborhood traffic control, specific minimum criteria must be met before the installation. They are:

- Street speed limit must be 25 mph
- The street should be primarily residential in nature
- Average daily volumes of more than 2,000 vpd for complete closures or 1,000 vpd for partial closures
- Street not classified higher than neighborhood collector, no more than one lane in each direction
- Cannot be a major emergency response route
- Should not cause unacceptable diversion of traffic to other residential streets
- Street not used as a Citizens Area Transit (CAT) bus route
- Street must not be part of a flood control conveyance system

3. Placement of Street Closure.

The following guidelines should be used to determine the placement of the street closure:

- The street closure should be made on the perimeter of the neighborhood.
- Street closures should not be made in such a way as to interrupt internal neighborhood travel patterns. For example, the closure should not separate elementary school students from their school.
- The closure of a street by a neighborhood association or other group of individuals may require the vacation of the street right-of-way. The neighborhood association will be responsible for the maintenance of the vacated street.
- Unless otherwise approved by the Fire Chief, all closures will have to be constructed with an emergency access conforming to Fire Department standards.
- The street closure will require the construction of a cul-de-sac to terminate the street sections. A mid-block closure would require that both stub streets be terminated with cul-de-sacs or, if acceptable hammer-heads. The radius of the cul-de-sac will be dependent on parking restrictions. If parking is prohibited, a smaller radius may be allowed. If the resultant stub street contains frontage for four or fewer homes, the Traffic Engineer, with the concurrence of the Director of Public Works and the Fire Chief, may waive the cul-de-sac requirement or allow a hammer-head.

4. Signs and Markings.

It is essential to warn roadway users of the street closure and guide their subsequent action. All signs and markings shall be in conformance with the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).